

# Calvary Protestant Evangelical Free Church

2801 Park Avenue, Baldwin, NY 11510

Pastor Charles Lucchesi 516-223-4070

E-mail: [calvarychurch@optonline.net](mailto:calvarychurch@optonline.net) Website: [www.cpcbaldwin.com](http://www.cpcbaldwin.com)



## CALVARY CHRONICLE

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### The Secret To A Happy Life

By R.C. Sproul

James is sometimes called the “New Testament book of Proverbs.” That’s because of passages such as James 4 that give us a series of loosely linked aphorisms of practical, godly wisdom. This chapter begins with our universal concern about conflict:

*What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. (James 4:1-3)*

The world is marked by warfare. There’s global war and national conflict; there’s warfare in the church; there’s warfare in the community; there’s warfare in the home - there’s conflict all around us. James says that these quarrels, fights, disputes, and contentions come from within, from the fallenness of our hearts. The motivation for these conflicts is envy, or covetousness, which is a transgression we rarely hear about in our own day.

Conflict is the fruit of covetous hearts that want what others have. Now, it’s not inherently wrong to want something we don’t have. James’ statement that we do not have because we do not ask implicitly calls us to ask God to give us our desires. We should feel no shame when we desire good things as long as our desire does not make those good things into idols. The warning against covetousness comes into play when James acknowledges that sometimes we ask *wrongly* for what we don’t have. Sometimes we ask for good things in the wrong spirit.

What does this mean? Consider that we ask for things because we believe they will make us happy. This turns into covetousness when we believe that we have an inalienable right to pursue pleasure as the source of

happiness. Maximizing pleasure is our culture’s chief goal, but happiness and pleasure are profoundly different.

I’m not opposed to pleasure. I enjoy pleasure. But remember, sin is tempting because it can be pleasurable - in the short term. We sin because we think it will feel good. Every time we sin, we believe the original lie of Satan, who tempts us that we will be happy if we get the pleasure we want. Hedonism, which defines the good in terms of the pleasurable, is the oldest philosophy to oppose God.

However, sin never brings happiness - the state of inner delight, blessedness, and contentment wherein there is no room for greed or covetousness. Christians know moments of happiness, when we are alone in the presence of God, in fellowship with Him, and it is enough to know our sins have been forgiven. But soon we forget and we’re worrying about the bills. Suddenly, we say, “If I just had a little bit more money, if I just had a better car, if I just had a nicer house, I’d finally be happy.”

After explaining conflict’s source, James reveals what ends it and brings true happiness:

*But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Submit yourselves therefore to God...Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. (James 4:6-7, 10)*

Humility is the secret to a happy life. What is humility? Scripture does not say the humble person is Mr. Milquetoast, the wishy-washy person, the spineless man who is a doormat for the world; rather, the humble person is one who fears God. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and such fear flows from a heart that is in awe of God and bows to His authority.

(continued on next page)

The opposite of humility is arrogance. To think God owes us every pleasure we want manifests an unspeakable arrogance that presumes to critique God's provision for us. Every time we start fighting over what we don't have, our struggle is ultimately with the Lord. Is anything more foolish than warring with God? Opposition from God is opposition with a capital *O*. He's the last being I want to have opposing me. God opposes the proud, so we need to get this maxim from James into our souls: "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

If there's anything that we ought to be in a passionate quest to achieve, it's the grace of God. By definition, grace is not something you can earn. You can receive grace only if God in His mercy gives it to you. It's a gift. You can't buy, earn, or merit it. God gives grace to the humble because they understand the graciousness of grace. Humility

willingly submits one's life to God's sovereign mercy. Humble people recognize that the Lord doesn't owe them anything.

Do we want more grace? Let's try a little more humility. Do we seek less opposition from God? Let's do away with our pride. We must remember that we are unworthy servants throwing ourselves on the mercy of the court. When we enter God's presence and demand that He give us something, or try to persuade Him to give us something as if we were His counselors who advise Him of a better way of doing things, we've entered into His presence not boldly as the Bible calls us to do, but arrogantly. We must come to Him in thanksgiving and praise for the grace we've already received.

The more humble we are, the more grace we get. The prouder we are, the more God opposes us.

## **Church Updates**

As the concern for the positivity rate for the virus in our area stays high, the church will still function with the abundance of caution. The worship service, Children's Church, and Bible studies will continue, but other activities and events (such as Sunday School, Neighborhood Night, Seniors Luncheon) are on hold until the positivity rate declines.

**The Sunday worship services are held each week at 11:00 a.m. in the sanctuary.** We strongly encourage everyone to please wear a face mask out of consideration for one another. There is plenty of seating space in order to practice physical distancing.

The sermon will continue to be recorded and posted on-line for all to view:

Visit the church website ([www.cpcbaldwin.com](http://www.cpcbaldwin.com) - click on "YouTube") and also streamed on YouTube at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) (search for Calvary Church, Baldwin, NY).

**Children's Church is held during the 11:00 service.** The children are dismissed just before the sermon and meet in the fellowship room. Please note that on the first Sunday of each month (when Communion is scheduled) Children's Church will not be in session.

The **Wednesday Night Bible Study** continues to meet at the church at 7:00 p.m. The men and women are studying the book of 2 Peter, and also have a time of prayer.

The **Thursday Night Ladies Bible Study** resumes on September 16th. The women will be meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Patti Senita's home. They will continue their study of the book of Acts.

The most current information is e-mailed weekly on Friday. If you have not been receiving any communications from the church, please contact the church office and we will gladly add you to the list.

## **Courage or foolishness?**

It takes a lot of courage

To put things in God's hands,

To give ourselves completely -

Our lives, our hopes, our plans,

To follow where he leads us

And make his will our own.

But all it takes is foolishness

To go the way alone!

## **M** Missions Sunday with the DeValve's

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On Sunday, August 15th, John and Nancy DeValve came to Calvary for a Missions Sunday. For 36 years both John and Nancy have served with SIM in Niger, Africa. SIM is a century-old catalyst for global mission that brings good news to people who are living and dying without the gospel. The country of Niger is just about twice the size of Texas with a population of 25 million people, is 98% Muslim, and is one of the most hottest countries in the world.



While in Niger, John and Nancy had been involved in many ministry opportunities including church planting. John taught at the Niger Theological College and was also involved in music ministry. His book, *“Worship Music and Culture: The Case of the Songhai of Niger,”* was recently published and is currently available on-line. Nancy kept very busy as a personnel coordinator and business administrator for SIM Niger.

Due to their family, for medical reasons, and reduced ministry because of insecurities and threats, John and Nancy made a decision to end their full-time ministry in Niger and return to the United States. They are ready for their next steps in missions work and will soon begin new jobs.

John presented a spiritual message, referencing Hebrews 12:1-3. He compared our Christian walk with running a race. Running takes discipline, endurance, and perseverance. We need to persevere in our faith to get through the difficult times.

Three ways to persevere:

1. Remember (past)

- What God has done for the saints in the past.
- What God has done for you in the past (in your life).
- Who you are - what is your identity in Christ.
- Thank God for what He has done and what we have.

2. Training, Discipline (present)

- Sacrifice and self control.
- Discipline - maintaining a relationship with God, reading and studying the Bible, praying, being with others in fellowship, and developing the gifts God has given you.
- Our weight - strip off our weights, anything that gets in our way.
- Sin - strip the sin from you, confess.

3. Look, Fix our eyes on Jesus (future)

- Don't look back.
- Look forward to the goal - the finish line - which is Jesus Christ.
- For the joy set before us.

There are three promises from scripture:

- Amidst all the change and decay, the Lord does not change (Malachi 3:6).
- He is still on the throne and to be exalted (Psalm 46:10).
- He will make all things new (Revelations 21:5).

John and Nancy will be moving to Ohio in October and look forward to starting their new jobs. John will be working as a Theological Education Consultant for Francophone (French Speaking) Africa; Nancy has taken a position as the assistant to the SIM USA Personnel Director for African Missionaries; and they both will be involved with a Refugee and International Student Ministry.

**Prayer requests from John and Nancy:**

Additional financial support, for their move to Ohio and purchase of a home, wisdom as they ease into their new jobs starting in October, strength and wisdom for the church in West Africa as it faces many obstacles, and for the Bible college in Niamey.

**John and Nancy thank everyone at Calvary Church for the support and prayers over 36+ years in Niger. All praise to our God!**

# Calvary Chronicle

Calvary Protestant Church  
2801 Park Avenue  
Baldwin, NY 11510

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## BIRTHDAYS

### SEPTEMBER

4th David Jones  
5th Denis Sandoval-  
Vallejos  
6th Zoraida Rose  
7th Miki Hilburger  
7th Amanda Pink Hoffman  
9th William Hilburger Jr.  
10th Kathryn Chalavoutis  
13th Laura Hetzel  
14th Becky Carman  
14th Myrtle Glover  
18th Fred Valentine  
19th Karen Dowling  
21st Fitz Alcindor (Jr.)  
24th Derek Watts  
26th Gabrielle Alcindor  
29th Pete Ekstrom  
29th Thalia Waldvogel

### OCTOBER

4th Samantha Hetzel  
Schultz  
6th Victoria Manuel  
10th Barbara Corcoran  
13th Vincent Elcock  
15th Robert Brown Jr.  
17th Stephanie Wong  
18th Brett Rose  
18th Eden Nembhard  
21st Connor Watts  
22nd Ellen Heneghan  
23rd Barbara Jamison  
25th Vickie Mandato  
29th Ryan Waldvogel

**Happy  
Birthday!**

## ANNIVERSARIES

### SEPTEMBER

7th Bob & Nancy Bennett  
8th Harold & Lois Verity  
18th Tom & Peg Corcoran  
19th Leigh & Barbara Grant  
24th Jeovanni & Daniele Nembhard  
26th Fitz & Magalie Alcindor  
27th Jimmy & Ellen Heneghen  
28th Mike & Rebecca Senita  
29th Jason & Dianne Miller



### OCTOBER

2nd Howard & Maryann Brockway  
8th Vincent & Rosemary Rotolo  
10th Denis & Giselle Sandoval  
12th Wes & Becky Carman  
16th John & Lisa Conroy  
16th Tony & Sarabeth DiCostanzo

**A good way to forget your troubles  
is to help others out of theirs.**